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She refuses to sing the music selected for her by the chorister, and if he insists she declares he is no gentleman. Then she runs with a garbled story to the minister or music committee and assumes the air of injured innocence generally. She is generally spoken of as "a Tartar," which is an unjust aspersion upon a remote and comparatively inoffensive people of Asia. She affects great intimacy with the clergyman and his family. By her constant efforts at predominance in the choir she acquires a masculine style of behavior, which she mistakes for dignified independence. She thinks the other singers are intended by Providence as accompanists to her own singing, and is vehemently opposed to singing any music not calculated to showing of her own ability. She is altogether a mysterious dispensation of Providence, like mosquitoes, small pox, or the income tax.

There is one other class of the choir soprano which is not so rare as many would suppose, simply because those who belong to it make the least trouble and pretension. We refer to the educated Christian lady who adds to her correct deportment and refined taste real ability and skill in music. Such a vocalist a church is loth to lose, and when a soprano retains for years the same situation, it may be taken for granted that she belongs to this honorable and noble class of women. To such we would not apply the name even of "model soprano." They are far superior to such a title; their price is above rubies.

#### ANECDOTE OF HERZ, THE PIANIST.

When Herz, the celebrated pianist, was in California, he announced a concert in one of the new cities, and was obliged to send to San Francisco for a property very necessary to the entertainment—viz., a piano. At the hour announced for the concert, the tickets were all sold, the house was crowded, the artist was at his post, and everything was in readiness—except the piano.

In consequence of an inexplicable delay, the instrument had not arrived. Herz looked at his rough and bearded auditory in a very agreeable trepidation. What if the gold-digging *dilettanti* should take it into their heads to give him a taste of revolver or bowie-knife, by way of filling up the time? Heavy drops of perspiration stood on the frightened pianist's brow, and he began to wish himself in China, in Kamschatka—anywhere but in California. The miners saw his alarm, and kindly comforted him. "Never mind the cussel piano," said two or three of them soothingly: "we don't care for it; we came to see you. Make us a speech!" Herz, with restored serenity, did the best he could. The spoken entertainment seemed to please the audience; and everybody, except the artist, had quite forgotten all about the piano, when its arrival was announced.

A number of stout men carried the instrument into the hall, and placed it on the platform. It was a three-cornered, or "grand" piano, and Herz, promising himself to astonish these simple and easily-satisfied inhabitants of the Pacific coast, seated himself on an empty whiskey keg, (instead of the more civilized stool), and ran his fingers rapidly over the key-board. Blum! blum! splash! splash! not a sound did the piano utter, save that of keys striking in the water. The Californians who had brought the "box" from San Francisco, finding it very heavy, had floated it to town, and upon dragging it out upon the levee, had neglected to pour the water from the interior.

SINGING BY SPURGEON'S CONGREGATION.—A writer to the *Western Presbyterian*, thus describes the singing, as he heard it recently, of Spurgeon's congregation, London:

The hymn was read entirely through, and each verse was read before it was sung. The singing was started—not led—by a person who stood beside Mr. Spurgeon. I we could the familiar notes of "Old Hundred," and for the first time for several months, essayed to join in singing it. But I was surprised into silence by the manner in which the audience took possession of the tune. The most powerful organ, if there had been any thing of the kind used, could not have led them. The second hymn was announced to be, "Jesus, Lover of my Soul." The preacher said, "Let us sing this precious hymn softly to the tune of 'Pleyel's Hymn.'" When the first verse had been sung, and after he had read the second, he said, "Sing it softly!" With a countenance uplifted, and beaming with fervor, his book in both hands, keeping time involuntarily to the music, he sang with the congregation. When he had read the third verse, he said, "You do not sing it softly enough!" They sang it softly. It was as though some mighty hand damed up the waters of the Falls of Niagara, leaving a thin sheet to creep through between two fingers, and make soft, sweet music in its great lap, and plunge into the great basin below. Then when he had read the fourth verse, he said, "Now if we feel this, we will sing it with all our souls. Let us sing with all our might;" and the great congregation burst forth into song. It was as though the Great Hand had been suddenly uplifted, and the gathered waters were rushing on their united way in awful grandeur.

#### MUSICAL GOSSIP.

Verdi got his new opera, "Don Carlos," before the French public at L'Academie on March 12th, and reports vary in regard to its real merits. Some writers commend it and the performance quite enthusiastically, while others find nothing worth praising in the whole opera, except an incidental ballet.

The London *Orchestra's* correspondence denies that opera any merit beyond a taking air sung by Gueymard and two bass numbers. All else is declared by him to be massive, uninteresting and dull so far as the music is concerned, and only a pretty ballet scene really saved it. He says Faure has a good scene, Morere not much of a part, and Mlle. Saas's role is ungracious, but if the parts are bad the singing is indifferent. He sums up the result in two words—*success d'estime*. It is a frightfully heavy, terribly long, and ennui to a degree. Verdi wrote it and therefore it has a *success d'estime*. Had a lesser man turned it out it would have been a *fiasco*.

An elaborate and closely written *critique* upon "Don Carlos" appeared in the London *Musical World* of March 16th, which attributes that opera to a false Verdi, who left his fortunate inspirations and style for a new path to fame. The opera is too like "Il Forza del Destino," whose condemnation should have warned him against repeating its grand mistakes. Verdi is there accused of imitating Meyerbeer in his "L'Africaine," and like most imitators, spoiling good effects by the imperfect manner in which they are produced. He thinks a run of sixty nights may be had for "Don Carlos" if the ballet is well kept up, and severe cuts are made to shorten its dull passages. The latter saving clause was effected speedily after Verdi left Paris, but the correspondent blames the librettists for excessive length of the drama and its many cold passages, for Verdi

had few good situations to write for, and hence followed dullness in many portions. That correspondent speaks enthusiastically of its beautiful third act, with praise for scattered morceaux, but advises Verdi to cherish his old style in future. The second tableau in second act has a pleasing motive and graceful rhythm. The third tableau of third act has a fine trio, the fourth tableau, a perfect march with admirable color. Its motive, however, lacks originality. The Prayer of Deputies he considers very fine, and the duo in fifth act, beautiful.

Patriotic sentiments grandly expressed abound. Morere is considered the weak point in the cast although gifted with a very agreeable, sympathetic voice, for he lacks power, confidence and historic ability. Faure distinguished himself greatly in that opera, especially in close of 4th act, when he received an ovation for splendid delivery of recitatives.

Verdi is considered to be obliged by the zeal which marked the performance of his new work, and Mmes. Gueymard and Saas complimented for making dull music acceptable even to hearty applause.

Adelina Patti succeeded well in "La Gazza Ladra," although she did not efface Maibrani's performance of Ninetta from Parisian memories.

Miss States had opportunity as Elisa in "Columella" to win more laurels at Les Italiens. Critics remark unfavorably upon the orchestra in that opera as lacking *ensemble*.

Gounod declined serving upon the Exposition Committee over which Auber presides, because "Romeo et Juliet" required all his time, and Gauthier replaced him.

Auber alternated with Rossini in presiding over the performance of Mme. de Grandval's mass, which is declared a work of the highest order.

At Georges Pfeiffer and de Gasporini's second musical conference, Mlle. Nilsson excited great enthusiasm by singing Adelaide.

Alfred Jaell commenced his Parisian campaign at L'Athenee, playing Mendelssohn's concerto with orchestra among other selections.

M. E. Chaine, of Paris, gained the prize offered by the St. Cecilia Society, at Bordeaux, for a Symphony and Poil da Silva, two honorable mentions.

Abert's opera, "Astorga," did not please Weimar's public because it lacked originality and its book afforded no good opportunities for interest.

The question as to Italian Opera in St. Petersburg next season yet remains undecided, although Russian pride desires its suppression, to aid National theatres.

Before Joachim left St. James's Hall for Paris he played with Mann's orchestra in that popular Concert Saloon, and in solo at Sydenham Palace and Earl Dudley's house.

A wordy discussion goes on in London journals about Oakley's qualifications for his Edinburgh professorship, and Chorley's strictures upon him are sharply reviewed—pro and con.

Earl Dudley's concert at his residence—Park Lane—appears to have excited London dilettanti remarkably, as Benedict conducted it and Joachim and Pia ti, his niece and Miss Wynne performed there.

Sims Reeve's first performance in English Opera at Drury Lane Theatre was the favorite part of Francis Osbaldiston—"Rob Roy."